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(21) International Application Number: PCT/US98/08178 (22) International Filing Date: 22 April 1998 (22.04.98) (30) Priority Data: 08/846,012 25 April 1997 (25.04.97) US (71) Applicant: TULARIK INC. [US/US]; Two Corporate Drive, South San Francisco, CA 94080 (US). (72) Inventors: AMARAL, M., Catherine; Tularik Inc., Two Corporate Drive, South San Francisco, CA 94080 (US). CHEN, Jin-Long; Tularik Inc., Two Corporate Drive, South San Francisco, CA 94080 (US). (74) Agent: OSMAN, Richard, Aron; Science & Technology Law Group, 75 Denise Drive, Hillsborough, CA 94080 (US).		(81) Designated States: AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, CA, CH, CN, CU, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, GB, GE, GH, GM, GW, HU, IL, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TR, TT, UA, UG, UZ, VN, ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, SD, SZ, UG, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG). Published <i>With international search report.</i>
(54) Title: REGULATORS OF UCP2 GENE EXPRESSION (57) Abstract The invention relates to regulators of UCP2 gene transcription, including novel UCP2 transcriptional promoters. UCP2 gene promoters are used in diagnosis and pharmaceutical development. In particular, transfected cells comprising UCP2 gene promoters operably linked to a reporter are used in high-throughput pharmaceutical screens.		

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5

Regulators of UCP2 Gene Expression

INTRODUCTION

10 Field of the Invention

The field of this invention is the transcriptional promoter of the UCP2 gene and its use in drug screening.

Background

15 A mitochondrial protein called uncoupling protein (UCP1) is thought to play an important role in the body's regulation of energy utilization. Such regulation provides wide spread physiological controls including body weight, appetite, glucose metabolism, temperature, immune responses, etc.. Mechanistically, UCP1 is thought to create a pathway that allows dissipation of the proton electrochemical gradient across the inner mitochondrial membrane in brown adipose tissue, without coupling to any other energy consuming process
20 (for review, see Nicholis & Locke (1984) Physiol Rev 64, 1-64). Unfortunately, the role of UCP1 in physiologies such as body weight regulation in large adult mammals such as people, cattle, pigs, etc. is likely to be limited, since there is little brown adipose tissue in such animals.

UCP2 is a second, related uncoupling protein that is much more widely expressed in
25 large adult mammals (see, e.g. Fleury et al. (1997) Nature Genetics 15, 269-272 and Tartaglia et al. (1996) WO96/05861). Consistent with a role in the regulation of energy utilization generally, and in diabetes and obesity in particular, the UCP2 gene is upregulated in response to fat feeding and maps to regions of the human and mouse genomes linked to hyperinsulinaemia and obesity. Accordingly, upregulators of this gene hold great therapeutic
30 promise for these diseases. To provide regulators of UCP2 gene expression, we have cloned the endogenous promoter of the human UCP2 gene and identified various deletion mutants having transcriptional regulatory activity.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The invention provides methods and compositions relating to the UCP2 gene transcriptional promoter. The compositions include recombinant regulators of gene expression comprising the UCP2 promoter of SEQ ID NO:1 or a deletion mutant thereof at least 50 bp in length having cis transcriptional regulatory activity. Exemplary such deletion mutants comprise at least one of SEQ ID NO:1, bases 411-460, bases 461-510, bases 401-563, bases 319-326, bases 98-104, bases 49-56, bases 49-104 and bases 547-554. In preferred embodiments, the regulators comprise at least one of a GC/SP1, GH-TRE and PR/GR binding site. In further embodiments, the regulators comprise a 5' untranslated UCP2 gene exon. Frequently, the regulators may further comprising a UCP2 or non-UCP2 core promoter operatively joined to said mutant.

The invention also provides hybridization probes and replication / amplification primers having a hitherto novel UCP2 specific sequence contained in SEQ ID NO:1 (including its complement and analogs and complements thereof having the corresponding sequence, e.g. in RNA) and sufficient to effect specific hybridization thereto (i.e. specifically hybridize with SEQ ID NO:1 in the presence of genomic DNA). Such primers or probes are at least 12, preferably at least 24, more preferably at least 36 bases in length.

The invention also provides cells and vectors comprising the disclosed UCP2 regulators, including cells comprising such regulators operably linked to non-UCP2 gene. Such cells find used in the disclosed methods for identifying agents which regulate the activity of a UCP2 promoter. In an exemplary such method, the cells are contacted with a candidate agent, under conditions wherein, but for the presence of said agent, the gene exhibits a first expression; detecting the presence of a second expression of the gene, wherein a difference between said first and said second expression indicates said agent regulates the activity of a UCP2 gene promoter.

The invention also provides other assays for transcriptional regulators including transcription complex formation assays. An exemplary such assay involves combining a DNA comprising a disclosed regulator with a transcription factor and a candidate agent, under conditions wherein, but for the presence of said agent, the regulator and transcription factor form a first association; detecting the presence of a second association of the regulator and transcription factor, wherein a difference between the first and second associations indicates the agent modulates the association of a UCP2 promoter and transcription factor.

The subject nucleic acid regulators also find a variety of other applications, including uses in diagnosis. In particular, hybridization probes and PCR primers derived from the disclosed-promoters are used to identify genetic mutations in samples comprising a UCP2 gene.

5

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURE

Fig. 1. Expression of luciferase enzymatic activity driven by UCP2 promoter constructs in CaPO₄ transfected HeLa cells. Cells are harvested 18 hrs post transfection and assayed for luciferase.

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The subject nucleic acids are of synthetic/non-natural sequences and/or are isolated, i.e. unaccompanied by at least some of the material with which it is associated in its natural state, preferably constituting at least about 0.5%, preferably at least about 5% by weight of total nucleic acid present in a given fraction, and usually recombinant, meaning they
15 comprise a non-natural sequence or a natural sequence joined to nucleotide(s) other than that which it is joined to on a natural chromosome. Nucleic acids comprising the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1 or fragments thereof, contain such sequence or fragment at a terminus, immediately flanked by a sequence other than that which it is joined to on a natural chromosome, or flanked by a native flanking region fewer than 10 kb, preferably fewer than
20 2 kb, which is at a terminus or is immediately flanked by a sequence other than that which it is joined to on a natural chromosome. While the nucleic acids are usually RNA or DNA, it is sometimes advantageous to use nucleic acids comprising other bases or nucleotide analogs to provide modified stability, etc.

The subject nucleic acids find a wide variety of applications including use as
25 hybridization probes, PCR primers, therapeutic nucleic acids, etc.; use in detecting the presence of UCP2 genes and gene transcripts, in detecting or amplifying nucleic acids encoding additional UCP2 homologs and structural analogs, in gene therapy applications and in a variety of screening assays.

In diagnosis, UCP2-promoter specific hybridization probes find use in identifying
30 wild-type and mutant UCP2 alleles in clinical and laboratory samples. Mutant alleles are used to generate allele-specific oligonucleotide (ASO) probes for high-throughput clinical diagnoses. In therapy, therapeutic UCP2 nucleic acids are used to modulate cellular

expression or intracellular concentration or availability of active UCP2. For example, UCP2 nucleic acids are used to modulate cellular expression or intracellular concentration or availability of active UCP2 protein. UCP2 inhibitory nucleic acids are typically antisense: single-stranded sequences comprising complements of the disclosed natural UCP2 transcript sequences, particularly the untranslated exon 1. Antisense modulation of the expression of a given UCP2 protein may employ antisense nucleic acids operably linked to gene regulatory sequences. Cell are transfected with a vector comprising a UCP2 sequence with a promoter sequence oriented such that transcription of the gene yields an antisense transcript capable of binding to endogenous UCP2 encoding mRNA. Alternatively, single-stranded antisense nucleic acids that bind to genomic DNA or mRNA encoding UCP2 protein may be administered to the target cell, in or temporarily isolated from a host, at a concentration that results in a substantial reduction in expression of the targeted protein. An enhancement in UCP2 expression is effected by introducing into the targeted cell type UCP2 nucleic acids which increase the functional expression of the corresponding gene products. Such nucleic acids may be UCP2 expression vectors, vectors which upregulate the functional expression of an endogenous allele, or replacement vectors for targeted correction of mutant alleles. Techniques for introducing the nucleic acids into viable cells are known in the art and include retroviral-based transfection, viral coat protein-liposome mediated transfection, etc.

The invention provides efficient methods of identifying pharmacological agents or lead compounds for agents active at the level of UCP2 gene transcription. The methods are amenable to automated, cost-effective high throughput screening of chemical libraries for lead compounds. A wide variety of assays for transcriptional regulators are provided including cell-based transcription assays, promoter-protein binding assays, etc. For example, the disclosed luciferase reporter constructs are used to transfect cells such as HeLa cells for cell-based transcription assays. Specifically, HeLa cells are plated onto microtiter plates and used to screen libraries of candidate agents for lead compounds which modulate the transcriptional regulation of the UCP2 gene promoter, as monitored by luciferase expression. An exemplary promoter-protein binding assay is described below. The following examples, exemplary promoter deletion mutants and screening assays are offered by way of illustration and not by way of limitation.

EXAMPLES

Transfection of cultured HeLa cells:

Transient transfections were carried out using cultured HeLa cells by calcium phosphate precipitation. 5 ug of promoter-luciferase plasmid DNA were co-transfected with either 1 ug of pMSV expression vector or 1 ug of pMSV-TR expression vector. Samples
5 were co-precipitated with 2 ug of salmon sperm DNA and 0.2 ug of a β -galactosidase internal control expression vector, then applied atop adherent HeLa cells in 6 well tissue culture plates. After 16 hr cells were washed in phosphate buffered saline and refed with fresh DMEM/F12 culture medium supplemented with 10% fetal bovine serum. After an additional
10 24 hr cells were harvested, lysed and assayed for luciferase and β -galactosidase enzymatic activity according to manufacturer's recommendations (Promega).

Isolation of human UCP2 genomic clones.

Genomic clones containing the promoter region, the first exon and the remaining 5' untranslated region of the human UCP2 gene were obtained by hybridization screening of a bacteriophage λ library using a PCR amplified probe derived from hUCP2 encoding
15 sequences. The clones were further confirmed by rehybridization using a PCR probe derived from 5' untranslated region sequence, which were obtained from RACE PCR amplification using a primer U5R (ATCGGATCCGAATGGTGCCCATCACACGCGGTA) (SEQ ID NO:2). Genomic clones were subcloned into pBluescript KSII (Stratagene), and then
20 sequenced using an Applied Biosystems DNA sequencer. The DNA sequence of human UCP2 exon I was identical to the first 100 bp of an EST clone (184239). The promoter sequence was subjected to BLAST search on the NCBI server and found no homolog to any known sequence.

Promoter sequence analysis

The DNA sequence of the first untranslated exon and upstream DNA of the mouse
25 UCP2 gene is shown in SEQ ID NO:1. The transcription start site is located at position 461 and exon I proceeds to position 565. A number of transcription factor binding sites are present: GC/SP1 sites are found at positions 200-209, 303-311, 370-379, 383-392 and 395-404. A GH/TRE site is found at positions 319-326; a PR/GR site at positions 546-554; an IRBP site at positions 49-56; and an AGP/EBP site at positions 98-104.

Deletion mutant construction and activity analysis

The promoter activity of the 5' flanking region of human UCP2 gene and a variety of deletion mutants thereof are conveniently screened in a transient transfection assay using

mammalian cell lines. An exemplary assay is the HeLa-cell based luciferase reporter assay of Fig. 1. Selected promoter deletions are amplified by PCR using targeting primers.

Amplification primer pairs for exemplified deletions are as follows:

- D1: ACTACGCGTGGGTGGGTAGTTTGCCAGC (SEQ ID NO:3)
 5 ACTAAGCTTCGAGCCGCAGGGAGAACA (SEQ ID NO:4)
 D2: ACTACGCGTTGCACTTAAGACACGGCCCC (SEQ ID NO:5)
 ACTAAGCTTCGAGCCGCAGGGAGAACA (SEQ ID NO:4)
 D3: ACTACGCGTGGAAGGCAAGAGGTGTGTGA (SEQ ID NO:6)
 ACTAAGCTTCGAGCCGCAGGGAGAACA (SEQ ID NO:4)
 10 D4: ACTACGCGTTGCCATCCTCACAGAGGTT (SEQ ID NO:7)
 ACTAAGCTTCGAGCCGCAGGGAGAACA (SEQ ID NO:4)
 D5: ACTACGCGTGGGAGTGGCAAGGGAGTGAC (SEQ ID NO:8)
 ACTAAGCTTCGAGCCGCAGGGAGAACA (SEQ ID NO:4)
 D6: ACTACGCGTGATGGGACGCACGGAAACGG (SEQ ID NO:9)
 15 ACTAAGCTTCGAGCCGCAGGGAGAACA (SEQ ID NO:4)
 D7: ACTACGCGTGCGGGGCGGTCCCCGCGGAA (SEQ ID NO:10)
 ACTAAGCTTCGAGCCGCAGGGAGAACA (SEQ ID NO:4)
 D8: ACTACGCGTGTAGGAGTGGCAGGCCCGGC (SEQ ID NO:11)
 ACTAAGCTTCGAGCCGCAGGGAGAACA (SEQ ID NO:4)
 20 D9: ACTACGCGTCCCCGAGGCTTAAGCCGCG (SEQ ID NO:12)
 ACTAAGCTTCGAGCCGCAGGGAGAACA (SEQ ID NO:4)

The deletions may be recombined in any desired variation. For example internal deletions are readily prepared by amplifying both 5' and 3' deletions followed by ligation. Alternatively, a UCP2 promoter deletion may be fused with non-UCP2 promoter element(s) to form heterohybrid promoters. Internal deletions and heterohybrid constructs are exemplified as follows:

- D1 DTRE:Deletion A) ACTACGCGTGGGTGGGTAGTTTGCCAGC (SEQ ID NO:3)
 AACGAATTCCCGCGGGGGACCGCCCCGCG (SEQ ID NO:13)
 PCR then EcoRI and MluI digested
 30 Deletion B) AACGAATTCCTGCTCCAGGGTCTCCGCACCCAA (SEQ ID
 NO:14)
 ACTAAGCTTCGAGCCGCAGGGAGAACA (SEQ ID NO:4)

PCR then EcoRI and HindIII

Triple ligation A+B+pGL2B

D1 DGCs: Deletion C) ACTACGCGTGGGAGTGGCAAGGGAGTGAC (SEQ ID NO:8)

AACGAATTCCCGGGCCTGCCACTCCTACTT (SEQ ID NO:15)

5 PCR then EcoRI and MluI digested

Deletion D) AACGAATTCCCCCGAGGCTTAAGCCGCG (SEQ ID NO:16)

ACTAAGCTTCGAGCCGCAGGGAGAACA (SEQ ID NO:4)

PCR then EcoRI and HindIII

Triple ligation A+B+pGL2B

10 D9-SV40 Core promoter: Deletion A) ACTACGCGTGGGTGGGTAGTTTGCCAGC (SEQ ID NO:3)

AACGAATTCCCGCGGGGGACCGCCCCGCG (SEQ ID NO:13)

PCR then EcoRI and MluI digested

15 The PCR fragments are restriction enzyme digested by MluI and HindIII, and then subcloned into MluI and HindIII sites of pGL-2B or pGL-2P (Promega). Transient transfections are carried out using cultured HeLa cells by calcium phosphate precipitation method. After 40 hours, cells are harvested, lysed and assayed for luciferase activity. Exemplary mutants are shown to a range of transcriptional activity (Fig. 1).

Protocol for Thyroid Hormone Receptor (TR) - UCP2 gene promoter binding assay.

20 A. Reagents:

- Neutralite Avidin: 20 µg/ml in PBS.

- Blocking buffer: 5% BSA, 0.5% Tween 20 in PBS; 1 hr, RT.

- Assay Buffer: 100 mM KCl, 20 mM HEPES pH 7.6, 0.25 mM EDTA, 1% glycerol, 0.5 % NP-40, 50 mM BME, 1 mg/ml BSA, cocktail of protease inhibitors.

25 - ³²P TR 10x stock: 10⁻⁶ - 10⁻⁸ M "cold" TR supplemented with 200,000-250,000 cpm of labeled TR (Beckman counter). Place in the 4 °C microfridge during screening.

- Protease inhibitor cocktail (1000X): 10 mg Trypsin Inhibitor (BMB # 109894), 10 mg Aprotinin (BMB # 236624), 25 mg Benzamidine (Sigma # B-6506), 25 mg Leupeptin (BMB # 1017128), 10 mg APMSF (BMB # 917575), and 2mM NaVO₃ (Sigma # S-6508) in 10 ml of PBS.

30 - Oligonucleotide stock: (specific biotinylated). Biotinylated oligo at 17 pmole/µl, UCP2 gene promoter containing TRE site: (BIOTIN)- (SEQ ID NO:1, bases 301-350).

B. Preparation of assay plates:

- Coat with 120 μ l of stock N-Avidin per well overnight at 4 °C.
- Wash 2X with 200 μ l PBS.
- Block with 150 μ l of blocking buffer.
- Wash 2X with 200 μ l PBS.

C. Assay:

- Add 40 μ l assay buffer/well.
- Add 10 μ l compound or extract.
- Add 10 μ l 33 P-TR (20,000-25,000 cpm/0.1-10 pmoles/well = 10^{-9} - 10^{-7} M final concentration).

- Shake at 25C for 15 min.
- Incubate additional 45 min. at 25C.
- Add 40 μ l oligo mixture (1.0 pmoles/40 μ l in assay buffer with 1 ng of ss-DNA)
- Incubate 1 hr at RT.
- Stop the reaction by washing 4X with 200 μ l PBS.
- Add 150 μ l scintillation cocktail.
- Count in Topcount.

D. Controls for all assays (located on each plate):

- a. Non-specific binding (no oligo added)
- b. Specific soluble oligo at 80% inhibition.

All publications and patent applications cited in this specification are herein incorporated by reference as if each individual publication or patent application were specifically and individually indicated to be incorporated by reference. Although the foregoing invention has been described in some detail by way of illustration and example for purposes of clarity of understanding, it will be readily apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art in light of the teachings of this invention that certain changes and modifications may be made thereto without departing from the spirit or scope of the appended claims.

SEQUENCE LISTING

(1) GENERAL INFORMATION:

- 5 (i) APPLICANT: AMARAL, M. Catherine.
CHEN, Jin-Long
- (ii) TITLE OF INVENTION: Regulators of UCP2 Gene Expression
- (iii) NUMBER OF SEQUENCES: 16
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- 15 (v) COMPUTER READABLE FORM:
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(C) OPERATING SYSTEM: PC-DOS/MS-DOS
(D) SOFTWARE: PatentIn Release #1.0, Version #1.30
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(B) FILING DATE:
(C) CLASSIFICATION:
- 25 (viii) ATTORNEY/AGENT INFORMATION:
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(B) REGISTRATION NUMBER: 36,627
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30 (A) TELEPHONE: (415) 343-4341
(B) TELEFAX: (415) 343-4342

(2) INFORMATION FOR SEQ ID NO:1:

- (i) SEQUENCE CHARACTERISTICS:
- 35 (A) LENGTH: 736 base pairs
(B) TYPE: nucleic acid
(C) STRANDEDNESS: double
(D) TOPOLOGY: linear
- (ii) MOLECULE TYPE: cDNA
- (xi) SEQUENCE DESCRIPTION: SEQ ID NO:1:
- | | | | |
|----|--|-----------------------|-----|
| 40 | GGGTGGGTAG TTTGCCACG GTAGGGGGGC TGGGCCCAT | AAAGAGGAAG TGCACCTAAG | 60 |
| | ACACGGCCCC GCTGGACGCT GTTAGAAACC GTCTGGCTG | GGAAGGCAAG AGGTGTGTGA | 120 |
| | CTGGACAAGA CTTGTTTCTG GCGGTCAGTC TTGCCATCCT | CACAGAGGTT GGCGGCCCGA | 180 |
| | GAGAGTGTGA GGCAGAGGCG GGGAGTGGCA AGGGAGTGAC | CATCTCGGGG AACGAAGGAG | 240 |
| 45 | TAAACGCGGT GATGGGACGC ACGGAAACGG GAGTGGAGAA | AGTCATGGAG AGAACCCTAG | 300 |
| | GCGGGGCGGT CCCCGCGGAA AGGCGGCTGC TCCAGGGTCT | CCGCACCCAA GTAGGAGTGG | 360 |
| | CAGGCCCCGCG CCCGCCCCGC AGGCCCCACC CCGGGCCCCG | CCCCCGAGGC TTAAGCCGCG | 420 |
| | CCGCCGCCTG CGCGGAGCCC CACTGCGAAG CCCAGCTGCG | CGCGCCTTGG GATTGACTGT | 480 |
| | CCACGCTCGC CCGGCTCGTC CGACGCGCCC TCCGCCAGCC | GACAGACACA GCCGCACGCA | 540 |
| 50 | CTGCCGTGTT CTCCTGCGG CTCGGTGAGC CTGGCCCCAG | CCCTGCGCCC TTTGCGCCCC | 600 |
| | CCACGCTTGT TCTGCGTGCG CTGCCCGCTC TTCCATTTAC | CTTCTCTCCC ACCCAAGTTT | 660 |
| | GTACTCTTTT CTTTCTCTCG GTTTTATTTT TTGTTTTTGT | TTGTTTGT TTGTTTGT | 720 |
| | TTGCTCTGT CTCCCA | | 736 |

(2) INFORMATION FOR SEQ ID NO:2:

- 55 (i) SEQUENCE CHARACTERISTICS:
(A) LENGTH: 34 base pairs
(B) TYPE: nucleic acid
(C) STRANDEDNESS: double
(D) TOPOLOGY: linear
- (ii) MOLECULE TYPE: cDNA
- (xi) SEQUENCE DESCRIPTION: SEQ ID NO:2:
- 60 ATCGGATCCG AATGGTGCCC ATCACACCGC GGTA

34

(2) INFORMATION FOR SEQ ID NO:3:

- 65 (i) SEQUENCE CHARACTERISTICS:
(A) LENGTH: 29 base pairs
(B) TYPE: nucleic acid
(C) STRANDEDNESS: double

(D) TOPOLOGY: linear
(ii) MOLECULE TYPE: cDNA
(xi) SEQUENCE DESCRIPTION: SEQ ID NO:3:
5 ACTACGCGTG GGTGGTAGT TTGCCCAGC 29

(2) INFORMATION FOR SEQ ID NO:4:
(i) SEQUENCE CHARACTERISTICS:
(A) LENGTH: 27 base pairs
(B) TYPE: nucleic acid
10 (C) STRANDEDNESS: double
(D) TOPOLOGY: linear
(ii) MOLECULE TYPE: cDNA
(xi) SEQUENCE DESCRIPTION: SEQ ID NO:4:
15 ACTAAGCTTC GAGCCGCAGG GAGAACA 27

(2) INFORMATION FOR SEQ ID NO:5:
(i) SEQUENCE CHARACTERISTICS:
(A) LENGTH: 29 base pairs
(B) TYPE: nucleic acid
20 (C) STRANDEDNESS: double
(D) TOPOLOGY: linear
(ii) MOLECULE TYPE: cDNA
(xi) SEQUENCE DESCRIPTION: SEQ ID NO:5:
25 ACTACGCGTT GCACTTAAGA CACGGCCCC 29

(2) INFORMATION FOR SEQ ID NO:6:
(i) SEQUENCE CHARACTERISTICS:
(A) LENGTH: 29 base pairs
(B) TYPE: nucleic acid
30 (C) STRANDEDNESS: double
(D) TOPOLOGY: linear
(ii) MOLECULE TYPE: cDNA
(xi) SEQUENCE DESCRIPTION: SEQ ID NO:6:
35 ACTACGCGTG GAAGGCAAGA GGTGTGTGA 29

(2) INFORMATION FOR SEQ ID NO:7:
(i) SEQUENCE CHARACTERISTICS:
(A) LENGTH: 28 base pairs
(B) TYPE: nucleic acid
40 (C) STRANDEDNESS: double
(D) TOPOLOGY: linear
(ii) MOLECULE TYPE: cDNA
(xi) SEQUENCE DESCRIPTION: SEQ ID NO:7:
45 ACTACGCGTT GCCATCCTCA CAGAGGTT 28

(2) INFORMATION FOR SEQ ID NO:8:
(i) SEQUENCE CHARACTERISTICS:
(A) LENGTH: 29 base pairs
(B) TYPE: nucleic acid
50 (C) STRANDEDNESS: double
(D) TOPOLOGY: linear
(ii) MOLECULE TYPE: cDNA
(xi) SEQUENCE DESCRIPTION: SEQ ID NO:8:
55 ACTACGCGTG GGAGTGGCAA GGGAGTGAC 29

(2) INFORMATION FOR SEQ ID NO:9:
(i) SEQUENCE CHARACTERISTICS:
(A) LENGTH: 29 base pairs
(B) TYPE: nucleic acid
60 (C) STRANDEDNESS: double
(D) TOPOLOGY: linear
(ii) MOLECULE TYPE: cDNA
(xi) SEQUENCE DESCRIPTION: SEQ ID NO:9:
65 ACTACGCGTG ATGGGACGCA CGGAAACGG 29

(2) INFORMATION FOR SEQ ID NO:10:
(i) SEQUENCE CHARACTERISTICS:

(A) LENGTH: 29 base pairs
(B) TYPE: nucleic acid
(C) STRANDEDNESS: double
(D) TOPOLOGY: linear
5 (ii) MOLECULE TYPE: cDNA
(xi) SEQUENCE DESCRIPTION: SEQ ID NO:10:
ACTACGCGTG CGGGGCGGTC CCCGCGGAA 29

(2) INFORMATION FOR SEQ ID NO:11:
10 (i) SEQUENCE CHARACTERISTICS:
(A) LENGTH: 29 base pairs
(B) TYPE: nucleic acid
(C) STRANDEDNESS: double
(D) TOPOLOGY: linear
15 (ii) MOLECULE TYPE: cDNA
(xi) SEQUENCE DESCRIPTION: SEQ ID NO:11:
ACTACGCGTG TAGGAGTGGC AGGCCCGGC 29

(2) INFORMATION FOR SEQ ID NO:12:
20 (i) SEQUENCE CHARACTERISTICS:
(A) LENGTH: 29 base pairs
(B) TYPE: nucleic acid
(C) STRANDEDNESS: double
(D) TOPOLOGY: linear
25 (ii) MOLECULE TYPE: cDNA
(xi) SEQUENCE DESCRIPTION: SEQ ID NO:12:
ACTACGCGTC CCCCAGGCT TAAGCCGCG 29

(2) INFORMATION FOR SEQ ID NO:13:
30 (i) SEQUENCE CHARACTERISTICS:
(A) LENGTH: 29 base pairs
(B) TYPE: nucleic acid
(C) STRANDEDNESS: double
(D) TOPOLOGY: linear
35 (ii) MOLECULE TYPE: cDNA
(xi) SEQUENCE DESCRIPTION: SEQ ID NO:13:
AACGAATTCC CGCGGGGGAC CGCCCCGCG 29

(2) INFORMATION FOR SEQ ID NO:14:
40 (i) SEQUENCE CHARACTERISTICS:
(A) LENGTH: 33 base pairs
(B) TYPE: nucleic acid
(C) STRANDEDNESS: double
(D) TOPOLOGY: linear
45 (ii) MOLECULE TYPE: cDNA
(xi) SEQUENCE DESCRIPTION: SEQ ID NO:14:
AACGAATTCC TGCTCCAGGG TCTCCGCACC CAA 33

(2) INFORMATION FOR SEQ ID NO:15:
50 (i) SEQUENCE CHARACTERISTICS:
(A) LENGTH: 30 base pairs
(B) TYPE: nucleic acid
(C) STRANDEDNESS: double
(D) TOPOLOGY: linear
55 (ii) MOLECULE TYPE: cDNA
(xi) SEQUENCE DESCRIPTION: SEQ ID NO:15:
AACGAATTCC CGGCCTGCC ACTCCTACTT 30

(2) INFORMATION FOR SEQ ID NO:16:
60 (i) SEQUENCE CHARACTERISTICS:
(A) LENGTH: 29 base pairs
(B) TYPE: nucleic acid
(C) STRANDEDNESS: double
(D) TOPOLOGY: linear
65 (ii) MOLECULE TYPE: cDNA
(xi) SEQUENCE DESCRIPTION: SEQ ID NO:16:
AACGAATTCC CCCCAGGCT TAAGCCGCG 29

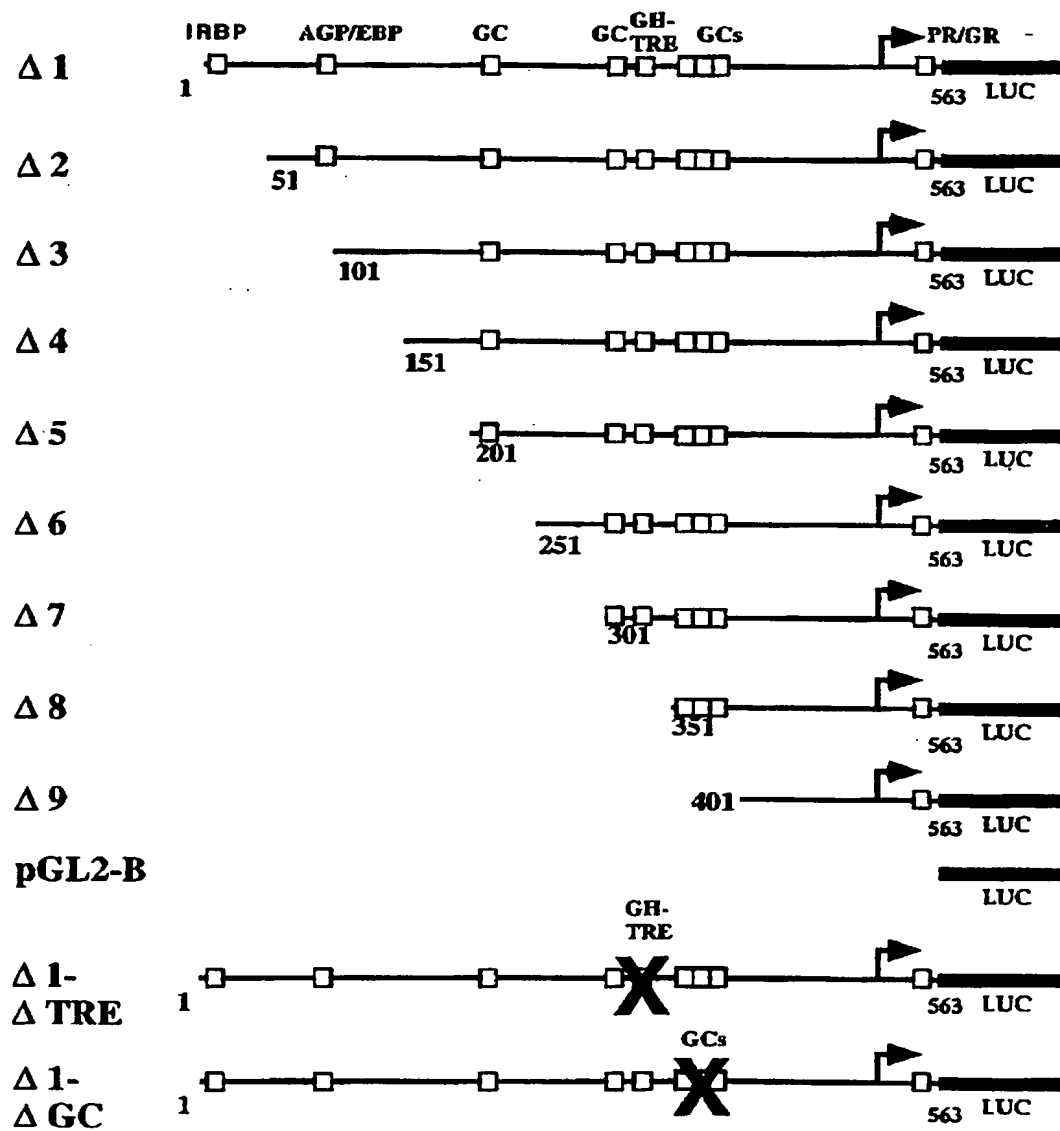
WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A recombinant regulator of gene expression comprising the UCP2 promoter of SEQ ID NO:1 or a deletion mutant thereof at least 50 bp in length having cis transcriptional regulatory activity.
5
2. A regulator according to claim 1, wherein said mutant comprises SEQ ID NO:1, bases 411-460.
3. A regulator according to claim 1, wherein said mutant comprises SEQ ID NO:1, bases
10 461-510.
4. A regulator according to claim 1, wherein said mutant comprises SEQ ID NO:1, bases 401-563.
- 15 5. A regulator according to claim 1, wherein said mutant comprises SEQ ID NO:1, bases 319-326.
6. A regulator according to claim 1, wherein said mutant comprises SEQ ID NO:1, bases 319-326.
- 20 7. A regulator according to claim 1, wherein said mutant comprises SEQ ID NO:1, bases 98-104.
8. A regulator according to claim 1, wherein said mutant comprises SEQ ID NO:1, bases
25 49-56.
9. A regulator according to claim 1, wherein said mutant comprises SEQ ID NO:1, bases 49-104.
- 30 10. A regulator according to claim 1, wherein said mutant comprises SEQ ID NO:1, bases 547-554.

11. A regulator according to claim 1 comprising a non-UCP2 core promoter operatively joined to said mutant.
12. A regulator according to claim 1 comprising a plurality of GC/SP1 binding sites.
13. A regulator according to claim 1 comprising a GH-TRE binding site.
14. A regulator according to claim 1 comprising a PR/GR binding site.
15. A promoter according to claim 1 comprising a 5' untranslated UCP2 gene exon.
16. A cell comprising a regulator according to claim 1 operably linked to non-UCP2 gene.
17. A method for identifying agents which modulate the association of a UCP2 promoter and a transcription factor, said method comprising steps:
- combining a regulator according to claim 1, a transcription factor and a candidate agent, under conditions wherein, but for the presence of said agent, said regulator and said transcription factor form a first association;
- detecting the presence of a second association of said regulator and said transcription factor;
- wherein a difference between said first and said second association indicates said agent modulates the association of a UCP2 promoter and said transcription factor.
18. A method for identifying agents which regulate the activity of a UCP2 promoter, said method comprising steps:
- contacting a cell according to claim 16 with a candidate agent, under conditions wherein, but for the presence of said agent, said gene exhibits a first expression;
- detecting the presence of a second expression of said gene;
- wherein a difference between said first and said second expression indicates said agent regulates the activity of a UCP2 gene promoter.

19. A method according to claim 18, wherein said gene is a reporter and said detecting step comprises detecting a colorimetric or luminescent signal of said reporter.

5 20. A method according to claim 18, wherein said gene is detected by hybridization to a nucleic acid specific for said gene.

**Fig. 1**

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US98/08178

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(6) : C12N 1/00, 5/10, 15/11, 15/63; C12Q 1/02, 1/68

US CL : 435/6, 29, 243, 320.1, 325, 410; 536/23.1, 24.1

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

U.S. : 435/6, 29, 243, 320.1, 325, 410; 536/23.1, 24.1

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

Please See Extra Sheet.

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	FLEURY et al. Uncoupling protein-2: a novel gene linked to obesity and hyperinsulinemia. Nature Genetics. March 1997, Vol. 15, No. 3, pages 269-272, see entire document.	1-20
A, P	MATSUDA et al. Cloning of rat uncoupling protein-3 and uncoupling protein-2 cDNAs: their gene expression in rats fed high-fat diet. FEBS Letters. 24 November 1997, Vol. 418, Nos.1, 2, pages 200-204, see entire document.	1-20
A, P	GIMENO et al. Cloning and Characterization of an Uncoupling Protein Homolog. Diabetes. May 1997, Vol. 46, pages 900-906, see entire document.	1-20

☒ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. ☐ See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:	*T* later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
A document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance	*X* document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
E earlier document published on or after the international filing date	*Y* document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art
L document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)	*A* document member of the same patent family
O document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means	
P document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed	

Date of the actual completion of the international search

03 JUNE 1998

Date of mailing of the international search report

19 AUG 1998

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT**International application No.**
PCT/US98/08178**C (Continuation). DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT**

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A, P	US 5,702,902 A (TARTAGLIA) 30 December 1997, see entire document.	1-20
A, P	US 5,741,666 A (TARTAGLIA) 21 April 1998, see entire document.	1-20

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US98/08178

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Electronic data bases consulted (Name of data base and where practicable terms used):

APS, DIALOG

search terms: UCP2, uncoupling protein 2, uncoupling protein homolog?, UCPH, promoter, genom?, regulat?, control?, assay?, bind?, express?, colorimetric, luminescent, hybridiz?